

INSPECTION REPORT

STATHERN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stathern, Nr Melton Mowbray

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119952

Headteacher: Mrs A Wright

Reporting inspector: Mrs H Bonser
22870

Dates of inspection: July 2nd – 5th 2001

Inspection number: 196483

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 10

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Water Lane
Stathern
Nr Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE14 4HT

Telephone number: 01949 860316

Fax number: 01949 869165

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Marsden

Date of previous inspection: December 10th – 12th 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22870	Hilary Bonser	Registered inspector	English; religious education; art and design; geography; music; Foundation stage.	The school's results and achievements; Teaching and learning; Leadership and management.
11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development; Care and welfare of pupils; Partnership with parents.
12367	Anthony Green	Team inspector	Mathematics; science; information and communication technology; design and technology; history; physical education; equal opportunities; special educational needs.	Curriculum learning opportunities; personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA Ltd
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stathern Primary School is a community school that draws most of its pupils from the rural village in which it is situated and from neighbouring hamlets. The school is smaller than average in size, with 88 boys and girls from 4 to 10 years of age. All pupils transfer to secondary education at the end of Year 5. Pupils' attainments on entry to the school vary from year to year, but are broadly average, with the full range of attainment represented. About twelve per cent of pupils are on the register for special educational needs, which is well below the national average. At present, none have statements of special educational need, which is below average. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, although the percentage of those known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. No pupils speak English as their second language or come from ethnic minorities. Since the last inspection, the number of pupils attending the school has nearly doubled and they are now taught in four classes. The present headteacher took up her post two years ago.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Stathern Primary School is a very effective school with many strengths. Pupils reach high standards and achieve very well by the time they leave the school, especially in English, science and mathematics, because the quality of teaching is very good. Pupils behave very well and they are interested in their work. The headteacher, staff and all members of the school community work together very well to improve standards for all pupils and are fully committed to continuing this. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards have risen to well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave the school because the quality of teaching has improved further and pupils are now taught very well.
- The headteacher leads and manages the school very well, working closely and very effectively with staff and governors to bring about further improvements in teaching and the standards of work.
- The school cares very well for its pupils, providing very good support and guidance for them; together with the excellent relationships between all members of the school community, this contributes very well to pupils' very positive attitudes towards school.
- The school promotes pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well, successfully encouraging them to behave very well, to get on very well together and to work hard.
- The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities that are relevant to all pupils and help to interest and motivate them very well.
- The very good partnership with parents makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- The music curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and understanding fully in all aspects of the subject.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1996. It has responded well to the issues then noted. Much of the improvement has taken place in the last two years. Schemes of work have been put in place in all subjects, except music, that help pupils to build systematically on previous learning. There has been a significant improvement in assessment that helps teachers to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities more effectively. Standards in information and communication technology have risen rapidly and are now well above the expected levels by the time pupils leave the school. In addition to this, the overall quality of teaching has improved from good to very good. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented very well and very consistently. The impact of these changes can be seen in the very good achievements of pupils of all abilities and in the further improvements in the already good standards noted in the last inspection. However, there is no sense

of complacency; rather a strong, shared commitment in the school to continue to raise standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The requirement to report the school's results in comparison with all schools nationally and with similar schools is lifted. This is because the small number of pupils in each year group means that fluctuations can occur from year to year in the school's performance in the national tests. This can give an unreliable picture of improvements in standards and should be treated with care.

Results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, based on average points, were above average in writing and very high in reading and mathematics when compared to all schools nationally. They were in line with those of similar schools in writing and well above them in reading and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicate that standards were very high compared to all schools. The unconfirmed results from 2001 show similarly high standards in all areas, with an improvement in writing. Variations between the performance of boys and girls overall are not significantly different, as boys do better overall here than in most schools nationally. The school's performance has continually exceeded the national average over the last three years.

Comparisons were made of the test results of individual pupils when they started school, at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 5. What is clear from this, is that boys and girls of all abilities continually build on good progress as they move through the school to achieve very well in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school in relation to their individual starting points.

Lesson observations and past work show that standards at the end of Year 2 in English and mathematics are well above the expected levels and above them in science. At the end of Year 5, they are well above the expected levels in all three subjects. Standards in information and communication technology are also well above the expected levels at the end of Year 5 and above them in physical education, design and technology and history. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop some aspects of music to the expected levels. However, overall this is a further improvement from the time of the last inspection when standards and achievement were described as good. The school has now begun to set challenging targets which it is likely to meet.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy coming to school, they are enthusiastic, eager to learn and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good throughout the school both in lessons and at play. No exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good ; excellent relationships between pupils and with the adults in the school; pupils act responsibly.
Attendance	Very good; well above the national average.

The way in which pupils work together, concentrate and show interest in their work is a particular strength of the school. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils in lessons were never less than good and very good or better in 85 per cent of them.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-10 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The overall quality of teaching is very good. It was good or better in 86 per cent of the lessons seen. Of these, 45 per cent were very good and seven per cent excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This is a further improvement from the time of the last report, when teaching was described as good. As a result, pupils now learn very well in many lessons throughout the school. This, in turn, has led to improvements in the already good standards noted in the last report and in the achievements of pupils of all abilities. Teaching is now very good in English, mathematics and science, where it was good before. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught very well. Teaching was also good overall in information and communication technology and satisfactory in geography. In other subjects, not enough teaching was seen to make an overall judgement.

The school now meets the needs of girls and boys of all abilities very well including the more able and those with special educational needs. Teachers have high expectations of the amount and quality of pupils' work. In very well taught lessons across the school, pupils of all abilities concentrate well, work hard and make very good progress because teachers give them stimulating and demanding work. What often made the difference between these lessons and those that were satisfactory, was how well teachers kept pupils focused on exactly what they should be learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors and very good links with other schools and the local community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good ; pupils have clear achievable targets and are very well supported. They receive very effective help from classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall; good for spiritual and cultural development; very good for moral and social development .
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well; all staff know pupils very well and use this sensitively to provide caring support and guidance.

A particular strength is the way that all teachers make use of visits, visitors and very good links between subjects to provide work that is relevant to pupils and captures their interest. The school works very well in partnership with parents and this also makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership by the headteacher, very well supported by very good teamwork between all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall; they are taking an increasingly active and effective part in the management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; strengths and weaknesses are analysed increasingly well and result in effective action.
The strategic use of resources	Good; available money is used well to support the school's priorities.

Principles of best value are applied well to all spending decisions. There are sufficient learning resources to support the curriculum and staffing levels are satisfactory overall, with a good level of support staff for children in the foundation stage and pupils with special educational needs. The school works hard to make good use of the limited space available and makes suitable arrangements to ensure that the accommodation meets the needs of the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school. • Their children are well taught. They are expected to work hard, do their best and they make good progress. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is approachable and responsive to their views and concerns. • The children are well behaved and the school helps them to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside the classroom

The inspection team fully supports the very positive views parents have of the school. With regard to their concerns, the team found that there is a good range of after school clubs for the size of school and that pupils' learning opportunities outside the classroom are further extended by a very good variety of other activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The small number of pupils in each year group means that fluctuations can occur from year to year in the school's performance in the national tests. This can give an unreliable picture of improvements from year to year in standards. Consequently, comparisons made of pupils' attainment with all schools nationally and with similar schools should be treated with care.
2. Results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, based on average points, were above average in writing and very high in reading and mathematics when compared to all schools nationally. They were in line with those of similar schools in writing and well above them in reading and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicate that standards were very high compared to all schools. The unconfirmed results from 2001 show similarly high standards in all areas with an improvement in writing. When comparing pupils' individual results with those they obtained in baseline assessments when they started school, it is clear that all achieved better than expected and several achieved very well. Variations between the performance of boys and girls overall are not significantly different, as boys do better overall here than in most schools nationally. The school's performance has continually exceeded the national average over the last three years. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils, who reach the expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 5 shows how well the school meets their needs.
3. Children's attainments on entry to the school, from analyses of the baseline assessments and discussions with teachers, are broadly average, with the full range of attainment represented. However, the small intake leads to considerable fluctuations from year to year. For example, for the past two years, the majority of pupils had skills in some areas of their learning that were below the expected levels, whereas in the current year group, many had skills that were above the expected levels when they started school. What is clear from inspection evidence is that all children make good progress in all areas of their learning, in relation to their prior attainment. This year, most are likely to meet the early learning goals in all areas of their learning and many to exceed the expectations for their age at the end of the foundation stage. Detailed records are now kept of individual progress through the school. These, together with lesson observations and past work, show that boys and girls of all abilities build well on the good start they receive in their foundation stage, making good and often very good progress in many lessons in both key stages. As a result, they achieve very well overall in relation to their individual starting points by the time they leave the school at the age of ten. Standards at the end of Year 2 in English and mathematics are well above the expected levels and above them in science. At the end of Year 5, they are well above the expected levels in all three subjects.
4. This is a good improvement from the positive picture at time of the last inspection, when standards and achievements were described as good. It has been brought about by the very good leadership and management of the school and by a further improvement in the quality of teaching, which is now very good overall in English, mathematics and science. Other factors include the increasing impact of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the consistency with which these are implemented, as well as the good use the school makes of initiatives, such as the additional literacy strategy for pupils in need of additional support. Another reason is that more able pupils are given appropriately challenging work and those with special educational needs receive effective support and teaching, helping them to make very good progress. This year, there has been a successful focus on improving aspects of writing. The very good behaviour, concentration and positive attitudes that boys and girls of all abilities have towards their work also contributes to their achievements. As a result, the school is likely to meet the challenging targets it has set for the end of Year 2 and Year 5, as part of its wholehearted commitment to continuing to raise standards.
5. In English, standards overall are well above the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils achieve very well overall in relation to their

attainment on entry to the school in all aspects of the subject because they are taught very well and they have a rich and interesting curriculum. By the age of ten, pupils of all abilities listen very attentively, and respond thoughtfully to each other's views, building on each other's ideas. They speak confidently and fluently in large and small groups, giving reasons for their opinions. Teachers successfully promote a real enjoyment and enthusiasm for books and pupils use a good range of reading strategies. They apply their reading skills very effectively to retrieve information from a number of different sources. By the time they leave the school, boys and girls write in a wide variety of forms and usually spell accurately. Their work is neatly presented. Most are beginning to use more complex sentences confidently and to extend their ideas. Teachers make very good use of opportunities across the curriculum to extend the range of pupils' literacy skills as well as using work from other subjects to provide an interesting context for learning.

6. Standards in mathematics are well above the expected levels in all aspects of the subject at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave the school. Pupils achieve very well overall in relation to their previous attainment. Numeracy skills are taught very well throughout the school, partly as a result of the successful implementation of the national numeracy strategy and also because the quality of teaching is now very good. Pupils use a good range of mental strategies. Teachers make very good use of opportunities in other subjects to extend pupils' mathematical skills.
7. Standards in science are above the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above them at the end of Year 5. Pupils achieve very well overall. They develop very good investigative skills and good scientific knowledge and understanding in relevant practical contexts. Improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection have contributed to the rise in standards.
8. Standards in information and communication technology meet the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and are well above them by the end of Year 5. Pupils achieve very well overall. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory at both key stages. Good teaching, improved staff expertise and resources, together with very good opportunities for pupils to use information technology across the curriculum have all contributed to this.
9. In religious education, most pupils meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 5 and achieve satisfactorily. They develop a sound knowledge of Christianity, but their understanding of some of the other religions they study is superficial. They show positive attitudes to the subject and respect for the beliefs and values of others.
10. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5, the majority of pupils broadly meet the expected levels for their age and make sound progress overall in art and design and geography. Standards in design and technology and history meet the expected levels at the end Key Stage 1, and exceed them at the end of Year 5. Not enough physical education was seen in Key Stage 1 to make a judgement about standards, but these were above the expected levels at the end of Year 5. Although no music lessons were seen during the inspection, the quality of the singing heard was broadly as expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 5. However, planning and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in other aspects of the subject to the levels expected.
11. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and make very good gains in their learning, relative to their prior attainment. They make very good progress towards their individual targets because of well-matched work and the very good support given by the class teachers and learning support assistants. Higher attaining pupils also achieve very well as all teachers give them appropriately challenging work. This is an improvement since the last inspection. No significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls were noted during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development were described as good. This positive position has been well built upon and these aspects of pupils' development are now very good overall, with aspects that are outstanding. Relationships across the whole school community, including parents, are excellent and contribute very positively to pupils' general demeanour and their learning.
13. In all lessons, pupils' attitudes and behaviour was at least good. In 85 per cent of lessons it was very good and at times outstanding. This is a very high level, especially in view of the very hot and sticky weather conditions that existed at the time of the inspection. Pupils enjoy school, and are eager to come. The school offers them a wide range of activities that extend and enrich the curriculum and fires pupils with interest and enthusiasm. In lessons, pupils pay full attention to what their teacher is saying. They are very keen and eager to be involved in lessons. They show great concentration and are very well motivated and attentive. When involved in the tasks set in lessons for them, they work with great perseverance showing full engagement in what they are asked to do and genuine interest and involvement. For example, after a Year 5 literacy lesson, the pupils were still discussing the work they had been doing on designing a leaflet for 'Water Aid'. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to class, group and individual activities. Their behaviour is very good and sometimes excellent. They respond enthusiastically to appropriate questions. They are well integrated and work very well with other pupils.
14. These very good attitudes extend beyond lessons in the classroom. For example, during the inspection, a rehearsal was held for the leavers' service to be held in the last week of term. With the exception of foundation stage children, all pupils were in the church for at least one and a half hours. The way they paid attention, listened to what was going on, not fidgeting or fussing and being very well behaved was exemplary. These same very good attitudes and behaviour extend to playtimes, lunch, on the way to swimming, whilst changing and in and around the pool. On the very rare occasions when pupils' behaviour has to be corrected they respond quickly. Pupils all know the very high expectations set for them; they help to draw up classroom rules and talk about the rules to reinforce them when necessary. The consistency with which all staff throughout the day implement the behaviour code helps pupils to meet these high expectations. No bullying was observed during the inspection; parents are very happy that staff deal swiftly and effectively with any incidents of that nature. As with any misbehaviour, any bullying is fully discussed and the reasons fully explored and explained. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
15. Parents at the meeting prior to the inspection said they are very happy with the attitudes and values that the school promotes. The very positive comments made by the parents about pupils, such as the great respect shown to each other, the way minor disputes are quickly resolved and the way they all play together across the whole range of ages are fully borne out by inspection findings. Pupils are at ease with each other and with the staff. During lessons, pupils give each other the space and time to say what they want, they are respectful of what their classmates have to say and listen well. Pupils show high levels of responsibility and get on with their lessons, including when supervised by other adults if their teacher has to be out of the room. As they get older, pupils become more involved in their own learning and what they need to focus on to improve; this contributes to their learning. Pupils are encouraged to be as independent as possible from the time they start school. Thus, once pupils have settled into school life, parents are encouraged to let them line up and go into school on their own. The clubs that are run by the school develop not only practical skills, but also social ones.

16. Relationships across the whole school community are exemplary. The atmosphere within school is of one of total mutual support and this extends to parents and members of the community. Everyone in school shows genuine concern and interest in others and this creates an environment in which pupils develop confidence and self-esteem. A sense of camaraderie exists that ensures that pupils feel comfortable in discussing any concerns with staff. Staff are always willing to listen carefully to what the pupils are telling them, and to take action if needed. Pupils work and play together happily and productively. Older pupils look out for younger pupils; parents talk of the good support of pupils in the reception class by those in Year 5 at sports day. Success is celebrated well in the weekly whole school assembly, and, because everyone knows everyone else, the applause is warm and genuine.
17. Attendance is very high in comparison to other schools. The level of unauthorised absences is below the national average. Parents say that their children like coming to school and this view is supported by the very good attendance rate.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. There have been further improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, when it was described as good. As a result, the quality of teaching is now very good overall and pupils learn very well in many lessons. This, in turn, has led to improvements in the already good standards noted in the last report and in the achievements of pupils of all abilities as they move through the school. The quality of teaching was good or better in 86 per cent of the lessons seen. It was very good in 45 per cent of these and excellent in 7 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers now provide challenging work for pupils of all abilities, because they make good use of detailed assessment information to plan work that is carefully matched to pupils' needs. This is a particular improvement since the last inspection when it was found that more able pupils were not always challenged sufficiently. The quality of planning, with useful schemes of work now in place for all subjects, except music, has continued to improve and the consistency of approach with which teachers implement this provides even better continuity of learning for pupils. A well planned programme of in-service training and support for new teachers as they have joined the school, together with very close teamwork and good opportunities to observe good practice and to share expertise, has contributed well to the improvement and to the consistency of teaching across the school.
19. Teaching is now very good across the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, compared to good teaching at the time of the last report. This makes a significant contribution to the very good achievements of pupils of all abilities in these subjects. Teaching was also good overall in the lessons seen in information and communication technology and satisfactory in geography. It was very good in religious education in the teaching seen in Key Stage 1 and good in physical education where teaching was seen only in Key Stage 2. In art and design and history, music and design and technology, not enough teaching was seen to make a judgement. The overall quality of teaching is very good in the foundation stage and in both key stages. This consistency is reflected in the way that pupils build continuously on good progress at each stage, resulting in very good achievement in relation to their individual starting points by the time they leave the school.
20. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught very well throughout the school, helping pupils to achieve very well and to make very good progress in many lessons. One reason for this is that the relatively new team of teachers has worked extremely hard to implement the national literacy and numeracy strategies consistently, effectively helping pupils to build on previous learning. Other reasons include the good opportunities provided for pupils in need of extra support, through the good use of initiatives such as the additional literacy strategy and the very effective support given to pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' expertise has been strengthened through ongoing training, including the sharing of good practice by two leading literacy teachers on the staff. This helps teachers, for example, to use questioning and intervention well to extend pupils' skills and understanding. In a very well taught English lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher used her considerable subject expertise in very skilful questioning to help pupils to distinguish more clearly between the sounds of 'ed' and 't' at the end of words in the past tense. In a very positive way, she effectively used any mistakes made by pupils as further teaching points with the result that in subsequent written work pupils'

spelling of such words was also more accurate. In a well taught mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, the teacher used her subject knowledge well in taking pupils' misconceptions about equivalent fractions as further teaching points to help all improve their understanding. A particular strength is the way that teachers plan very carefully to use opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise and extend all aspects of their literacy and numeracy skills. They also make very good use of work in other subjects as a basis for stimulating work in English and mathematics and this helps to make pupils very keen to learn.

21. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Work is well matched to their specific needs. They are challenged appropriately to help them meet their targets. Consequently, they make very good progress. Individual education plans are kept up to date and targets are reviewed regularly. Teachers share with the learning support assistants the pupils' individual targets and the objectives and tasks for a lesson. There is very good formal and informal liaison between the class teachers and skilled learning support assistants, enabling them to provide very good support for pupils and to make a very positive impact on pupils' rate of learning. They give good feedback to teachers about pupils' progress, which helps to inform future planning. Pupils are managed very well. The majority of work takes place in the classroom. At times, pupils are withdrawn from classes for individual work with the special needs co-ordinator, learning support assistants or volunteer helpers but this was not observed during the inspection week, so it is not possible to judge the quality of this teaching.
22. In many lessons, there are strong features that contribute to the very positive attitudes pupils have to their learning. Teachers manage their pupils in a very consistent and positive way. This is based on the excellent relationships between all staff and pupils throughout the school. Teachers help pupils to meet their very high expectations of behaviour and work by creating a calm, secure and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Their own clear enjoyment and interest in what they do also has a positive effect on pupils. They have a thorough knowledge of individual pupils that they use sensitively to support them and promote their self-esteem. They listen to and value pupils' ideas, helping them to develop their confidence in expressing them. Many very good examples of this were seen in lessons across the school. It means that all pupils are keen to share their ideas, irrespective of their ability, and learn readily from their mistakes.
23. The very good cross-curricular links evident in so many lessons, the frequent use of pupils' first hand experiences on visits and with visitors, together with well chosen resources give considerable coherence and relevance to pupils' learning at all ages and capture their interest. Teachers work together particularly well as a team and share good practice very well. Many examples were seen of teachers using good subject knowledge well in effective questioning to both consolidate and extend pupils' learning, ensuring, for example, that boys and girls were equally involved. In many lessons, they use a good range of strategies to keep up a brisk pace and sense of urgency, by using time targets effectively. As a result, pupils listen well and are keen to contribute to class discussions. They settle very quickly and sensibly to group activities, showing how very well they can concentrate and work independently. Good examples were seen, in all classes, of teachers setting relevant homework that supported ongoing classwork well.
24. The impact of such features on pupils' rate of learning was exemplified in some outstanding teaching as in an English lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5 that helped them to make rapid progress in learning about techniques for persuasive writing. The choice of activity - a leaflet to persuade people to support Water Aid - motivated pupils very well indeed because it built on interesting work in geography. Several pupils, for example, had already accessed a useful web site at home for additional relevant information and others were keen to do this on the school computers at break or lunchtime. It meant that they had a good basis for informed writing and that they listened very attentively to the challenging text entitled 'Women and Water'. The teacher questioned the pupils very well indeed to ensure and extend their understanding. Boys and girls were equally keen to contribute as the teacher clearly valued what they said. She used almost every response for additional challenging questions that really kept pupils on their toes and took their learning forward at a rapid rate. She helped them to empathise with the tasks faced by some women in developing countries by getting them to test the weight of a five-litre container of water. She explained the well-matched, purposeful group

activities very clearly, setting high expectations of the work to be completed. The way that pupils responded to this was exemplary. They settled very quickly, working with full concentration either individually or very co-operatively in small groups as the tasks required and produced well presented good quality work in a short time. The teacher used plenary session very well indeed to focus pupils on the purpose of the persuasive devices that they had been investigating in a range of leaflets to help them consider which would be most relevant for their own work. Pupils' keen interest was reflected in the way that they continued to discuss how they were going to tackle their own leaflets as they went out for break.

25. In some less effective, although still satisfactory lessons, although teachers had clear objectives in their planning, they did not share these effectively with pupils. By contrast, in some very well taught lessons, the teacher not only discussed the objectives with pupils so they knew exactly what they should be learning, but kept pupils tightly focused by returning to them during the lesson. At the end, they encouraged pupils to evaluate their work against them, so that they knew how well they were doing. Although teachers set relevant targets for groups of pupils to work on, they do not yet use these to full effect in lessons to help pupils focus on the areas for improvement. Plenary sessions are sometimes used well to help pupils not only review, but to extend what they have learnt and also to set the context for what they will learn next. A good example of this was seen in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2. In some lessons, plenaries are too brief and such opportunities are lost.
26. A particular improvement since the time of the last inspection is the good use that teachers make of the detailed ongoing assessments of pupils' work and responses. Several good examples were seen during the inspection week of teachers adjusting lesson plans to take account of pupils' responses and level of understanding in the previous lesson. Especially in English and mathematics, teachers often plan ahead only for two or three days at a time for this reason. The careful assessments and lesson evaluations also result in teachers matching most activities very well to the needs of pupils of differing ages and abilities and providing appropriately challenging work. Teachers plan together very well to ensure that pupils of the same age in different classes have similar opportunities. Detailed planning and communication between the teachers that share the teaching of Year 1 and 2 pupils and between all teachers result in very good continuity of learning for pupils. This is reflected in the improved standards since the last inspection.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

27. The quality and range of the school's learning opportunities for promoting high standards are very good. The school has a rich curriculum, which is broad, balanced and relevant to the pupils and which meets the statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects, religious education and collective worship. The curriculum in the foundation stage is well planned and takes good account of the early learning goals for children of that age. Very good use is made of subject enrichment days, the local environment, visits and visitors to the school. All pupils, from the foundation stage to Year 5, have swimming lessons. The wide variety within the curriculum is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards achieved, because it motivates pupils very well. The allocation of time for the curriculum is above the national average at Key Stage 1 and broadly in line with the national average at Key Stage 2.
28. Very good emphasis is placed on the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Both are having a very good impact on the high standards in English and mathematics in the school, as well as helping pupils' learning well in other subjects.
29. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects, except music. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when policies for design technology, music and art had not been written and there were no schemes of work. In addition to the schemes for the national literacy and national numeracy strategies, schemes are now in place for all subjects, based on a range of nationally produced guidance. However, the present provision for music lacks breadth and balance and so is not effective in enabling pupils to develop their skills fully in all aspects of the subject. The scheme for religious education is in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for Leicestershire.

30. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and is taught in accordance with the requirements of the governing body. Provision has been well maintained since the previous inspection. In line with other primary schools in the Vale area, the governors have agreed that sex education and attention to drugs misuse is not formally taught until pupils transfer to Year 6 of the secondary schools. However, the governors have not published a specific policy to that effect. Incidental aspects of sex education and drugs misuse issues are taught as part of the science and health curriculum. The school nurse gives good support to health education lessons. The personal, social and health education programme also includes 'circle time', where pupils have the opportunity to discuss issues relevant to their own experiences.
31. As well as the school nurse, visitors to the school also include parents and grandparents, who talk to the pupils about their childhood memories, a tennis coach, football coaches from Nottingham Forest Football Club, cricket coaches from Leicester County Cricket Club, a rugby coach from the Leicester Tigers and a basketball coach. The road safety officer for Leicester teaches cycling proficiency and road safety and enters Key Stage 2 pupils in the annual road safety competition for local schools, with successful results. All the visitors make a very good contribution to the life and work of the school and enrich the opportunities provided for the pupils.
32. The provision for equality of access and opportunity is good. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils regardless of their ability, gender, race, or background. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated. They are very well supported in the classroom and their quality of learning is very good. The majority of pupils have appropriate access to the full curriculum, including activities organised outside of the school day. Pupils are introduced to other cultural traditions through religious education and visitors to the school. However, few visitors represent the multiethnic and multicultural society in which pupils live.
33. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good and enriches the curriculum. Staff give freely of their time to provide a good range of clubs and are well supported by parent helpers. Pupils enthusiastically attend and these are beneficial to the large number who take part. Sports activities include football, netball and cross-country running. Other activities include chess, recorders, art and French.
34. As well as the extra-curricular activities offered after school and at weekends, the school also takes part in the Vale schools enrichment days. Year 4 and 5 pupils throughout the area meet four or five times a year to take part in a curriculum activity. For example, a day of art activities, a day related to history, a day of science and a day of physical education skills. This year, as part of an initiative to further raise standards in English, the activities have all focused around writing. These have included visits from well-known authors of children's literature.
35. The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good and has improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be good. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is good and has improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory.
36. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. This is effectively fostered in the daily life of the school, religious education and the daily assemblies. Taped music is played at the start of whole school assemblies, which sets the tone for the assemblies. However, opportunities in class assemblies for music or a focus for a moment of reflection are less well developed. Teachers effectively use planned opportunities for pupils to experience 'awe and wonder'. For example, pupils in the foundation stage and in Key Stage 1 eagerly watched the daily progress of pupas as they hatched in to Painted Lady butterflies. They clearly felt the spirituality and wonder of nature. In a Year 1 and 2 science lesson, pupils watched with rapt attention a video of a butterfly hatching. There were cries of 'wow' and 'Ah' as the butterfly hatched and at the colours of the butterfly. In a Year 4 and 5 information technology lesson, pupils, the teacher and a parent, cheered spontaneously as a control program succeeded in working a model roundabout and a model ghost train. The natural environment around the

school is also used well for various aspects of the curriculum. Before Christmas, the youngest pupils went to the local woods for a 'reindeer hunt'. Regular visits to the school by local leaders of Christian faiths also contribute very well to the provision for the pupils' spiritual development. The Bishop of Peru has also visited the school during the term. However, there are no links with leaders of other faiths. Good use is made of the village church of St. Guthlac's for organised events such as the Harvest Festival, the Christmas service and the leaver's service. As part of the millennium celebrations teachers, governors, pupils and parents built a Millennium Garden in the school. This provides pupils with a quiet place to sit and reflect, or to enjoy the peace and nature of the garden.

37. There is very good provision for pupils' moral development. The headteacher and staff are good role models for pupils and emphasise the differences between right and wrong and the importance of the values of fairness, respect, truth and honesty. There is a clear code of behaviour, which is used throughout the school and which the pupils know well. From an early age pupils learn the difference between right and wrong. Assemblies celebrate good work, good behaviour and develop a sense of pride and self-esteem. Classrooms are organised and managed in a way that encourages pupils to be independent and responsible. They are given frequent opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups, where they help and support each other. As a result pupils show good levels of maturity, tolerance and respect. The school supports many charities; for example, Barnardos, The British Heart Foundation, Comic Relief, a local hospital and Water Aid.
38. The school's provision for social development is very good. From starting school, pupils are encouraged to relate well to each other, to take turns and to share willingly. Pupils become very good citizens as well as very good learners. All classes contain pupils of mixed abilities and they are given planned opportunities to work collaboratively together in various combinations of groups as appropriate. All classes also contain pupils from two year groups. This supports social development across a range of ages. Swimming lessons also combine two classes, which contain four age groups. These groupings give the pupils opportunities to work with pupils from other classes and ages. Social development is also promoted by whole school curriculum visits, for example, to a farm or to the Nottingham Playhouse. Year 5 pupils are given a good range of responsibilities. They support younger pupils in the playground and help younger pupils to send e-mails. The regular Vale curriculum days encourage Year 4 and 5 pupils to regularly mix with pupils from other schools. Staff and parents also organise a school disco, an outdoor Ceilidh and the May Fair. Pupils provide tea for senior citizens at Christmas.
39. The provision for cultural development is good overall. Very good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' own culture but the provision for preparing pupils to live in a multicultural society is satisfactory, as it is not developed as fully. In English, the authors Steve Barlow, Steve Skidmore, Michaela Morgan and Paul Cookson have visited the school. In history, pupils visit the New Walk Museum to look at the Egyptology section. In Science, Key Stage 1 pupils have a 'Minibeast day' at Beaumanor Hall and Key Stage 2 pupils a 'Light and sound' day at Green's Mill. In religious education, opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about their own Christian heritage and about the traditions and beliefs of others. In assemblies pupils celebrate Diwali and the Chinese New Year. Music is used to set the tone of whole school assemblies and the music and the composer is discussed. The wide range of visits and visitors increases pupils' knowledge of their own culture. However, there are few links with other ethnic groups and there are few multicultural images and resources displayed around the school to reflect the wider cultural diversity of the locality. This limits pupils' awareness and understanding of this aspect of their cultural development.
40. The local community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Parents, grand parents, senior citizens and governors regularly help in lessons. The school has very good links with a 'Mums and tots' group, which meets each week in the school, and very good links with the partner secondary school. Induction and transfer procedures are used well to ease pupils into school and to move them on to the next stage of their education. Children reaching the age of four are given a very good induction to the school through weekly visits. From Year 4, pupils have regular visits to the partner secondary school for curriculum enrichment activities with other primary schools in the area. This also gives pupils the opportunity to work with pupils from other primary schools who will also be attending the secondary school when

they reach Year 6. In their final term, Year 5 pupils visit their secondary school for two days of familiarisation. Good links have been established with the local teacher training institution.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school cares very well for its pupils. The school is very successful in creating an atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued and this contributes considerably to the confidence and determination with which they approach their time in school. The previous report described this area as generally positive; the school has built on and improved this position very well. Pupils confidently approach staff with any concerns; this is supported by comments from parents that say that pupils are encouraged to talk about problems and that they are sensitively handled. The whole school atmosphere is purposeful, active and supportive.
42. The school's procedures for child protection are very good. The headteacher has attended training in this area recently and has involved all staff in discussion about this issue. The school has established good contact with the relevant people at county hall, so that contact can be made if necessary. The same very good attention applies to pupils' health, safety and welfare. All necessary checks and risk assessment are made on buildings, appliances, and apparatus and for trips out of school. Fire drills are held termly and whenever the alarm goes off by mistake! All staff are trained well in the administration of emergency treatment for any specific medical conditions that pupils have. Any accidents are correctly recorded and parents are informed. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day, especially when in the play-park that is also used by the general public. Mobile telephones are taken whenever the pupils are engaged in school activities away from the school site.
43. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The behaviour policy is implemented very effectively. Part of its success is the fact that it has evolved over a number of years and is firmly based on principles that permeate the school - consideration for others, safety and happiness. All staff have reviewed the policy recently and its implementation, resulting in a very consistent approach throughout the school day. On the very rare occasions when any incidents of misbehaviour or bullying occur, they are very well recorded. Because of the excellent relationships between staff and pupils, any problems are discussed in a very constructive manner.
44. There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. All staff go out of their way to get to know every pupil in the school and this is demonstrated well in the very good details in the annual reports to parents, particularly in the section devoted to personal and social development. The school places a good level of emphasis on personal development; they set targets in this area along with educational targets. Teachers discuss any concerns that arise with parents, but they also tell parents of all the good things their children do!
45. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance. Registers are marked neatly and correctly, with reasons for absence correctly identified. The school monitors the reasons for pupils being away from school and this is mostly due to illness. However, the school is concerned that some routine medical appointments, holidays and even shopping trips still take place in school time. The governing body, who take a strong view on this, has recently sent a letter to parents reminding them of the only reasons why their children may be absent, as well as the disruptive effect that lateness has on the whole class.
46. The arrangement for the assessment and identification of pupils with special educational needs are good and are being implemented in accordance with the Code of Practice. The school cares for its pupils with special educational needs very well and has maintained the good care since the previous inspection. Baseline assessments and screening tests are used well to identify pupils' needs. This contributes to the very good progress that they make. Records are up to date and comprehensive. Examples of pupils' work are kept, which helps to monitor progress. Individual educational plans contain specific targets. The support given by the learning support assistant for pupils is very good. Liaison with outside agencies and external support staff is good. There is no register for the identification of able and talented pupils.

However, work is well matched for pupils who are able and talented and they make good progress.

47. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good. Assessment was described as a weakness in the previous report. Since then, and especially in the last two years, there has been a substantial improvement in assessment procedures and in the use made of the information from these. There are now good procedures for assessing pupils' progress, especially in mathematics and in English, where they are very good. This is because teachers make detailed assessments of each aspect of English at regular intervals. The optional national tests are now used in Key Stage 2, together with other regular tests in reading, spelling and mathematics. Teachers have begun to sample pupils' writing, comparing it to national standards. This year, teachers have developed and implemented a useful, common system for assessing pupils' progress in relation to the planned learning objectives for each term in all other subjects, except for religious education and music, where it has not yet been introduced. There are now more opportunities for pupils to be involved in self-assessment as they agree individual targets with their teachers.
48. The school has begun to make good use of all of the information from these procedures to raise standards and improve pupils' progress further. For example, the quality of information now enables teachers to plan more precisely so that pupils of all abilities, including the more able pupils in Key Stage 2, are given more challenging work. This is also an improvement since the last inspection. Information from baseline and school assessments and national test results are used to track the progress of individual pupils carefully as they move through the school. The headteacher and class teachers carefully review this information to identify any pupils who are not making the expected progress. Appropriate support is then provided through, for example, use of the additional literacy strategy, or individual programmes of work. This early identification and intervention to support individual difficulties contributes significantly to the very good achievements of pupils.
49. Class teachers are beginning to use the information well to set challenging end of year targets for their pupils in English and mathematics. They identify the specific areas that different groups of pupils need to work on to achieve these. However, teachers do not yet all make full use of this new development in lessons to help pupils to improve their own work. Information from national tests is analysed well to identify areas of relative weakness, such as some aspects of writing, and this leads to effective adjustments being made to the curriculum and in teaching and learning to raise standards further. A good example of this is the successful focus this year on improving handwriting and the presentation of work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The strong links with parents indicated in the previous report have been very successfully built on and are now very good. There is a clear sense of everybody - parents, school staff and governors - all working together for the good of the pupils. They, in turn, are aware of this and this helps develop their sense of security and belonging that enables them to give wholehearted attention to all the school has to offer.
51. The parents' views of the school expressed through analysis of the returned questionnaires, together with the high level of attendance at the meeting prior to the inspection, show very good levels of support for all the school is doing. Parents are particularly pleased with the good behaviour, the high expectations and attendant good progress their children make, the fact that their children like coming to school and the good leadership, management and approachability of the school. They are less happy about the range of activities outside the classroom. Inspection findings fully support the very positive comments made by parents. Inspectors judge that there is a good range of clubs organised for pupils; furthermore there are a good number of activities and visits made by pupils that support and extend their learning opportunities.
52. The information that parents receive is very good overall. They are kept very well up-to-date though termly newsletters. These also contain brief information about what each class is learning about in the next term; some parents say they would like more details about this. Other letters are sent out more regularly giving information about forthcoming events and

activities. Sometimes letters request support for what pupils are learning, for example by providing photographs of seaside holidays in the past. The response to these letters indicates a very high level of involvement and commitment from parents in their children's education. Annual reports on pupils' progress are sent out towards the end of the summer term. Overall, these are of good quality. English, mathematics and science are reported in more depth than other subjects. In most classes the reporting of other subjects tells parents what their children can do, and not just what they have covered. No targets are set within the reports and, although parents have a very good opportunity to discuss the report with teachers, there is no space for them, or the pupils, to make any written comment. Parents appreciate the reports, stating that they are happy with the depth and detail provided. Parents have termly opportunities to discuss their children's work with teachers and talk about targets set for them. These meetings are appreciated and well attended, although a few parents said they are unsure about what the different levels mean and whether the level their child is expected to reach is average or not for their age.

53. Liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is very good. They are fully involved in the process immediately a pupil is identified as having a need. They are aware of the point of contact in the school and share in the targets of the individual educational plans. They are kept fully informed by the special needs co-ordinator and class teachers about their child's progress, through regular formal and informal meetings.
54. Parents are very well involved in the work of the school and this involvement has a very positive effect on pupils' learning. A number of parents organise their work so they are able to come into school to help. Not all can come on a regular basis, but the school never has difficulty in getting sufficient adults to accompany pupils on trips or to events. Parents are supportive of the school over homework and especially when pupils are first starting to read. This helps to promote the high levels of reading achieved by many pupils. Almost all parents have signed the home-school agreement. Parents readily supply materials; for example, boxes needed for design and technology. Parents of the youngest pupils join very well into the spirit of having 'Talking Ted' to stay. The antics he gets up to are most amusing written up and photographed, mostly by parents. These are used well to promote children's speaking and listening skills through subsequent discussions in class. A major project last year was the creation of a 'Millennium Garden' that the pupils helped to design. Parents, governors and staff carried out much of the work. A parent has very thoughtfully organised a rota for watering the garden during the summer, to take the responsibility away from the teachers.
55. The school benefits from the fund raising activities of a number of parents. These funds are very much appreciated and are used to support the school in its work. A recent purchase has been a digital camera and evidence of its use is already to be seen. The parents are in the process of setting up a 'Friends' association; it is hoped that this will involve even more parents, past and present, in the valuable work of supporting the school both financially and through social events for both adults and children.
56. Parents are consulted both formally and informally. A recent questionnaire sought parents' views of both the strengths of the school and where and what could be improved. The suggestions were all discussed during the drawing up of the school development plan. Others, such as the weekly selling of fruit at playtimes, have already been acted upon, again with the help of a parent.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The overall leadership and management of the school is very good. There has been a good response to the weaknesses identified in the previous report. Much of the improvement has taken place since the present headteacher took up her post two years ago. Schemes of work in all subjects, except music, have been put in place that promote better progression in pupils' learning. There has been a significant improvement in assessment that helps teachers to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities more effectively. Standards in information and communication technology have risen rapidly and are now well above the expected levels. In addition to this, the overall quality of teaching has improved from good to very good. The judicious appointment of new staff and a good programme of induction and ongoing training for

them, as the school has expanded, have made a good contribution to this and to the consistent approach to teaching and learning, evident across the school. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented very well. The impact of these changes can be seen in the very good achievements of pupils of all abilities and in the further improvements in the already good standards.

58. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Her role in shaping a very well motivated staff team, fully committed to school improvement, has been an important factor in the improvements brought about since her appointment. The response of the new staff team to this, through high-quality teamwork, mutual support, sheer hard work and the dedication of all to improving the quality of teaching and learning for pupils is outstanding. The headteacher provides a very clear, common sense of direction and purpose for the school, which is shared by the whole school community. It is focused successfully both on raising standards and pupils' achievements, irrespective of ability, through the provision of a very rich and interesting curriculum, while continuing to provide a high level of care and support for them. She successfully promotes a very close partnership with parents and the community that has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The excellent relationships, teachers' very good knowledge of pupils, the way they promote self-esteem and recognise achievements are some of the many examples of how the school's aims and values are seen in practice daily. This makes a strong contribution to the personal development and very positive attitudes and very good behaviour of the pupils.
59. The headteacher and staff work together very well as an effective and efficient team to manage the smooth day-to-day running of the school and the pastoral care of pupils. While the co-ordination of key subjects and areas are led by individual teachers, some foundation subjects are now managed by the whole team, as there are a small number of them. This new approach works well, as can be seen in the useful reviews and priorities identified for some of these subjects. Individual co-ordinators are enthusiastic and committed to improving standards, teaching and provision in their subjects. Their involvement in identifying and monitoring priorities for the school development plan contributes to this. They regularly review planning and the outcomes of pupils' work, often by discussing pupils' learning with them. Through lesson observations, the co-ordinators for English and mathematics have helped to promote the very consistent approach to teaching and to improve its quality.
60. The headteacher, as special educational needs co-ordinator, gives very good leadership. She has made a positive impact on special needs provision. She ensures that pupils are well supported and make very good progress. She keeps staff up to date with various initiatives and ensures that teachers' plans are relevant to pupils with special needs. The co-ordinator is well supported by class teachers and the learning support assistants. The responsible governor for special educational needs has a good understanding of her role, of the needs of the pupils on the special needs register, and of the requirements of the Code of Practice.
61. The determination and capacity of the school to raise standards further, by improving the quality of teaching and learning, is seen in the focused use of the performance management process. This is linked effectively to well-planned in-service training and good opportunities for teachers to observe and share good practice. Since her appointment, the headteacher has taken a much more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation and to putting into place the systems to support this. The school has allocated funds, from September, for all co-ordinators to have regular formal opportunities to monitor teaching in their subjects, in addition to the informal ones already in use, so that they are in a better position to identify areas for ongoing improvements. Increasingly good use is being made of performance data to track pupils' progress and to set appropriately precise and challenging end of year targets to raise standards even further. National test results are carefully analysed to identify weaknesses in the curriculum so that appropriate remedial action is taken. For example, there has been a clear and successful focus this year on improving aspects of writing through the school. The headteacher takes full advantage of available initiatives, such the 'Investors in People' programme, to make further improvements in the management of the school.
62. Governors are committed and very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily. They fulfil their individual responsibilities well, for example in areas such as

premises management, school development planning, literacy and numeracy. Several governors work regularly in school. All of this, together with detailed information from the headteacher, helps to inform their clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of what is needed to continue to take the school forward. The headteacher is working closely with governors to bring about improvements in the organisation of the governing body to enable them to carry out some aspects of their role, such as strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation, in a more structured and pro-active way. For example, the finance committee that has been set up this year now receives detailed, clear information from the headteacher and bursar, so that they can ensure that financial planning fully supports the school's priorities and begin to monitor the impact of this on the educational standards of pupils.

63. The quality of financial planning and management is good, and the funds received by the school are used effectively to promote high standards, very good achievement and a very good quality of education overall. The school development plan is now costed well, closely linked to the planned provision for in-service training and is a useful tool to support continuing improvements in standards, teaching and all other areas of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Good use is also made of specific grants, for example, to improve the level of adult support in classes. The school ensures through competitive tendering and consultation that they obtain best value for money when purchasing resources and services. A particularly good example of this was the very good quality training obtained in information and communication technology for teachers as a result of detailed research by the co-ordinator. The headteacher and governing body now compare the school's expenditure and performance with that of other similar schools locally and nationally to help them evaluate the effectiveness of their spending decisions.

64. There are an appropriate number of well-qualified and experienced teachers who are deployed effectively. There is a higher than average number of learning support staff who provide skilled, effective support for pupils' learning, especially for those with special educational needs and for children in the foundation stage. The school secretary provides helpful, efficient support. The school is well supported at lunchtimes by the mealtime assistants and the premises officer maintains the buildings well. Overall, the accommodation, which has been increased and adapted as the numbers of pupils have risen, is satisfactory. Although space is limited and there is, for example, no school hall, every inch is used to full advantage to provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment. The school works hard to ensure that arrangements such as the use of the village Memorial Hall enable all aspects of the National Curriculum to be taught. The Millennium Garden provides a tranquil, shady area that is appreciated and well-used by pupils and adults alike. There has been an improvement in the level of resources overall since the last report. It is now satisfactory overall and good in information and communication technology and mathematics. Good use is made of loan services to supplement the school's resources and all are used well to support pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In the context of the school's many strengths, the governors, headteacher and staff should address the following matters in their action plan in order to raise standards and the quality of education further:

- a) Improve the opportunities in the music curriculum for pupils to fully develop their skills and understanding in all aspects of the subject by:-
 - Ensuring that the curriculum is planned and taught in a way that provides a balance between the required elements.
 - Putting into place a scheme of work that supports teachers effectively in planning clear objectives for each year group to help pupils build progressively on previous skills. (see paragraphs 10,29,75,134,135)

In addition to the above, the following points for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:-

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures in their area and to prepare for life in a multi cultural society. (see paragraphs 32,39)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	45	35	13	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll		YR– Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		88
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		8
Special educational needs		YR– Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		11
English as an additional language		No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language		0
Pupil mobility in the last school year		No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission		2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving		1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

The requirement to report the most recent National Curriculum results for the end of Key Stage 1 does not apply as there were less than 11 pupils in the year group.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	88
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y5

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR– Y5

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	57

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	204203
Total expenditure	205690
Expenditure per pupil	2392
Balance brought forward from previous year	16355
Balance carried forward to next year	14868

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	88
Number of questionnaires returned	33

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	18	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	36	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	42	0	3	3
The teaching is good.	82	14	5	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	30	6	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	15	0	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	18	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	36	3	0	6
The school is well led and managed.	68	27	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	33	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	27	12	3	6

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

65. The school makes very good provision for children in the foundation stage offering them a rich, broad, and relevant curriculum. Several improvements have been made to the positive picture described in the last report. For example, the quality of teaching has improved from good to very good overall. This helps children to firmly consolidate and extend their skills and learning so that they achieve well overall. There are now good assessment procedures that the teacher uses very well to carefully monitor and evaluate the progress of each child and to adjust what is taught in the light of their responses. In literacy and numeracy, for example, the teacher plans only one or two days ahead to allow for this. In addition, the school is also reviewing the resources and opportunities for outdoor play.
66. Children's attainments on entry to the school, from analyses of the baseline assessments and discussions with teachers, are broadly average overall, with the full range of attainment represented. However, the small intake leads to considerable variations from year to year. For example, for the past two years, the majority of pupils had skills in some areas of their learning that were below the expected levels, whereas in the current year group, many had skills that were above the expected levels when they started school. What is clear from baseline and detailed, ongoing individual assessments, past work and lesson observations, is that children of all abilities make good progress in all areas of their learning, in relation to their individual starting points. This year, most are likely to meet the early learning goals in all areas of their learning and many to exceed the expectations for their age at the end of the foundation stage.
67. After very good induction procedures, children start school on a part-time basis for about two weeks, before moving to full time attendance by the end of September. About half of them have had some pre-school experience. They are taught in a class with the majority of the Year 1 pupils. Two nursery nurses share a full time post, which provides a good level of regular adult support. The excellent teamwork that is so evident between them and the class teacher enables them to use their considerable skills and expertise to the full in supporting the children, contributing significantly to the good progress they make in all areas of their learning.

Personal, social and emotional development.

68. Children are keen to come to school because they know that they will be offered interesting activities and that they are valued. A very good induction programme invites children to spend a half day in the class, in groups of three or four, from their fourth birthday, and this is increased to two visits in the summer term. By the time they start school, children are already very familiar with routines, know the adults and many of the children well and know what is expected of them. They also know they are going to have a lot of fun as well working hard! This makes a significant contribution to the sense of security and confidence clearly felt by the young 'visitors' who were in the class during the inspection week and to how quickly they settle into school. The quality of teaching in personal, social and emotional development is very good. A strong emphasis is placed on this area of learning, which is reflected in the clear objectives of many of the structured play activities. The teacher and other adults show consistently high expectations of children's behaviour and independence. She helps them to meet these by establishing clear routines, through very good classroom organisation, and circle time discussions about rules, for example. All adults provide very good role models in the calm but very purposeful way they work and the excellent relationships with each other and the children. The Year 1 pupils in the class also set them a good example as well as looking after them well.

69. All of this has had a very positive effect on their developing sense of responsibility and independence and the way that they relate very well to each other and adults. Most children are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage and achieve well. They play and work together very well, taking turns and sharing resources well. A good example of this was seen when a group of children were given a number spinning game to play. They discussed and negotiated some of the rules, which they could then explain, agreed the order of turns and played the game amicably and with considerable enjoyment and success. The children already work well independently, while their teacher works with another group and develop their initiative by deciding which activity they would like to experience in some group sessions, settling quickly and sensibly to it. They develop their independence by running errands in pairs and taking turns to be helpers for the day. They clearly feel very confident in this very secure, caring but stimulating environment. Almost all show a good awareness of the consequences of their actions on others and thought for the needs of others. They can concentrate well in large and small groups and show interest in their learning. They tidy away resources, helping each other sensibly.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Children achieve well in this area, in relation to their individual attainment when starting school, and most are in line to meet the early learning goals in this area by the end of their foundation year and some to exceed them. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was very good. The teacher makes good use of elements of the Literacy Framework to help them improve their basic skills. Children listen well and speak clearly in turn to their teacher, who is careful to keep their attention with carefully targeted questions to ensure and extend their understanding. She explains very clearly exactly what she wants the children to learn and has high expectations of their response. For example, in an introductory session to writing captions, she used photographs of the children themselves on a visit to the seaside the previous week, which immediately captured their interest. She put them in mixed ability pairs to talk about each picture she held it up and then to agree a caption to write on their small whiteboard. This helped them to organise their thoughts very well. With the nursery nurse, she intervened very effectively to encourage them to use their knowledge of sounds to record their caption. Lower attaining children could identify the initial letter with help and read back what they had 'written'. Higher attaining children wrote unaided and legible captions such as, ' we are having lonth (lunch) on the sand' or 'Beth and Katie bidl a sadcasl', showing what good progress they have made over the year in writing.
71. Children enjoy books and know how to handle them. Some higher attaining children already read confidently and accurately. One, for example, read dialogue with good expression and had a good sight vocabulary. She thoroughly enjoyed and could explain the humour of the pictures. Most are developing a good knowledge of sounds and are starting to use these to help them to build up unfamiliar words as they read. They use pictures well to tell a story. They thoroughly enjoy joining in with rhymes and listening to stories. All the adults are patient and active listeners at all times. They show children that they value their efforts at communicating, intervening sensitively in their work and play activities to help children to articulate more clearly, explain their ideas and to increase their vocabulary.

Mathematical development

72. Assessments at the beginning of this year showed that most pupils' skills in this area were broadly similar to those expected for their age. The majority are achieving well and many are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of their foundation year. Very good teaching helps them to consolidate and improve their number skills. Very good examples were seen in a numeracy lesson of the teacher encouraging children to explain their mathematics thinking when asked to make a two letter word with large Scrabble 'tiles' and then add the digits, such as 3 and 4. One child showed how he had used his fingers to count. When asked if anyone had used a different way, a higher attaining child explained clearly, 'I had 4 in my head and counted on 3'. In subsequent activity, with a lower attaining group, to find different ways of totalling 8, the nursery nurse provided effective support, using good questioning to ensure understanding and gradually increasing the level of challenge. Most children count up to ten

objects reliably. Several recognise and use numbers up to 20, as well as some larger ones. They develop good understanding of mathematical vocabulary, such as 'more than' and 'less than' and 'shorter' and 'longer', for example, by comparing classroom objects with the length of a pencil and through well-focused sand and water play.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Children are helped to learn more about the place where they live by observing what kind of buildings they pass on their way to school and during walks around the village and make simple maps to show them. They begin to compare their own village with different places through well-chosen visits. They look at pictures and artefacts of old and new household items to see how they have changed. By taking part in a harvest festival, for example, in the local church they are taught to appreciate the world around them and how Christians praise God for this. The children are also encouraged to do this by looking after the goldfish and the bean seeds in the classroom and know that the plants need light and water to grow. They took great care not to disturb birds that were nesting under the school eaves. They can describe some of the differences between animals and insects. When making fruit salad, they learnt how to use kitchen tools such as peelers and knives safely. They explained why they must wash their hands and why the fruit should be washed. They were totally absorbed by their task – and thoroughly enjoyed their products afterwards! Children begin to develop their skills in information and communication technology by using suitable programs, for example, to support their work in literacy. The teacher made good use of a 'smart board' to show the children additional functions on an art program to those they already knew, such as tones of colour and the filler pot. The next day, two children successfully used these to make a seaside picture, which they then printed without help. The teaching that was seen was good. By the end of the foundation year, children achieve well, with most reaching the standards expected for their age and some exceeding them.

Physical development

74. The small amount of teaching seen in this area was very good. During a practice for sports day, the children moved safely in space at different speeds, showing awareness of others. Most can hold a simple balance, hop round a cone and back, and balance a wooden ball for an egg and spoon race. They understand the importance of changing for physical activity and of fair play. The teacher had high expectations of children's independence in dressing and undressing and for example in following a sequence of instructions both for setting out cones and bean bags and for the races themselves, which the children met successfully. When using play doh children were able to squeeze, twist and manipulate it into the shapes that they wanted and made appropriate use of scissors and other construction materials. The teacher promotes co-operative physical skills well through the use of parachute games, which children demonstrate confidently at events such as the May Fair. Overall, from the limited evidence seen, children meet the early learning goals for this area of learning by the end of their foundation year.

Creative development

75. At the end of the foundation year, the majority of children meet the expected levels in this area of learning. The small amount of teaching seen was good. For example, in an art lesson, the teacher helped children to develop their observational skills by questioning them carefully about different parts of Van Gogh's painting of Daisies and Poppies. They then worked in groups to paint representations of sections of the picture, to build on earlier experiences of colour mixing. The children worked with intense concentration, very carefully taking small amounts of powder paints to mix in palettes, trying very hard to match the colour in their part of the picture. Several knew, for example, to use blue and yellow to make green and tried adding more blue to get the colour they wanted. They shared paints and water very well, taking great care not to spill anything. Prompted by good questioning from the nursery nurse to help them explore further, their skills in colour mixing visibly improved over the session and they were justly proud of their finished work. They experiment with different materials when making a collage of Noah's Ark and use fruit prints to make repeating patterns. Music is taught by visiting instructors, supplemented sometimes by the class teacher. Planning shows that

children have opportunities to respond to music in different ways and to sing a good variety of songs and rhymes, although opportunities to experiment with sounds and instruments appear to be more limited. Children have good opportunities for role-play, currently in the attractive and inviting seaside resort of Stathern, where small deckchairs line the beach!

ENGLISH

76. The small number of pupils in each year group means that fluctuations can occur from year to year in the school's performance in the national tests. This can give an unreliable picture of improvements in standards. Consequently, comparisons made of pupils' attainment with all schools nationally and with similar schools should be treated with care. Results from the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, based on average points, indicate that standards in reading were very high compared to national averages and above average in writing. They were well above those of similar schools in reading and in line with them in writing. Trends over the last four years show that boys generally perform better than they do nationally, so that differences from girls are less marked. The unconfirmed results from the 2001 national tests shows that standards remain high in reading, with further improvements in the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the expected levels in writing. In comparing pupils' individual results with those they obtained in baseline assessments when they started school, it is clear that all pupils made good progress, achieving better than expected.
77. When children start school, their language skills are broadly average, although these vary considerably from year to year as a result of the small intake. Evidence both from lessons and past work shows that when pupils leave the school at the age of ten, standards in English are well above the expected levels. The detailed records now kept of individual progress show that boys and girls of all abilities achieve well in both key stages. They build consistently well on the good progress they make as they move through the school in all aspects of the subject to achieve very well overall by the end of Year 5 in relation to their attainment on entry to the school.
78. This shows further improvement from the positive picture at the time of the last inspection, when standards and achievement were described as good. A number of factors have contributed to this. The overall quality of teaching has improved from good to very good and the national literacy strategy has been implemented very well and very consistently. This year, the school has focused successfully on further improving standards in writing. As a result of this, in Year 2, for example, there is an improvement from last year in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels 2A and 3 in writing. Pupils with special educational needs are carefully identified at an early stage and the headteacher, as special needs co-ordinator, class teachers and skilled classroom assistants work closely together to help these pupils to do very well. The additional literacy strategy and individual programmes of work are used very well for this purpose. The effectiveness of the support is seen in the very high number of these pupils who reach the expected standards in English by the end of Year 2 and Year 5.
79. Standards in speaking and listening are above the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above them by the time that pupils leave the school at the age of ten. Pupils achieve very well overall. By the age of seven, they engage in conversation with adults confidently. They listen carefully to their teacher and to each other. They ask relevant questions and make thoughtful contributions to class discussions, which show good understanding of what they hear. They share their ideas and experiences clearly, for example, when discussing the difficulties of helping people that have been unkind to you. One reason for this is that teachers frequently give pupils opportunities for short paired discussions, so that they can order and verbalise their thoughts before responding in front of the larger group. By the age of ten, pupils respond thoughtfully and often perceptively to each other's views and build on these in discussions. Good examples were seen of this in many lessons, for example, in a geography lesson when pupils from Years 4 and 5 were discussing the best way to filter muddy water, giving reasons for their opinions.
80. Older pupils regularly lead their class assembly, carefully preparing themes of their choice that are sometimes about complex topical issues, such as the effects on people's lives of a local

bus strike. With the skilful intervention of their teacher, this leads to good quality discussion. Year 5 pupils confidently read or recite their contributions when practising for the leavers' service in the local church. Such opportunities make a very good contribution to the development of their speaking and listening skills. Teachers successfully extend pupils' vocabulary in all subjects through their consistent emphasis on pupils understanding and using technical terms and challenging vocabulary correctly. Several Year 2 pupils, for example, could describe clearly what they thought is meant by a 'parable', while pupils in Year 4 used terms such as 'evaporation' confidently and correctly. This also has a positive impact on increasing pupils' sight vocabulary when reading.

81. Standards in reading are well above the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5. Boys and girls of all abilities achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment, in both key stages. One reason for this is that phonics skills are taught very well and teachers make good use of the literacy hour, as well as opportunities across the curriculum to help pupils to apply these successfully. Another reason is that teachers throughout the school make effective use of guided reading sessions to extend pupils' skills and understanding. A very good example of this was seen with a group of higher attaining Year 2 pupils, who were comparing two recounts of a trip to the zoo. The teacher used well-structured challenging questions to help pupils to use the text to explain precisely why the second passage was a better example of the form, rapidly moving their learning on. One pupil, for example, spontaneously identified two different points of view about the bus journey. By the age of seven, almost all pupils read an appropriate range of books with reasonable fluency and accuracy and with good expression. They have a good sight vocabulary and use a variety of ways to tackle unfamiliar words. They show a good understanding of what they are reading in discussion, as well as by substituting sensible words for those they do not know. Some higher attaining pupils show an increasing understanding of plots and characters. One pupil, for example, could give several reasons for his evident enjoyment of 'Rent a Genius'.
82. By the age of ten, pupils often read quite challenging books, clearly and with expression. For example, one average attaining pupil read words such as 'prologue' and 'pathetic' confidently and with understanding and could discuss why he liked the 'comedy' of 'The Lost Diary of Shakespeare's Ghost Writer', as well as his response to the format in which it is written. Pupils apply their reading skills very effectively to retrieve information from a wide variety of sources, including books and the internet. They make good use of dictionaries and thesauri. This is largely due to a consistent approach to the teaching of research skills across the school and frequent opportunities and encouragement to apply them, both in classwork and in following personal interests in subjects across the curriculum. A very good example of this was seen in a 'fact-file' compiled by a more able Year 2 pupil about the Painted Lady butterflies that were hatching in his classroom. This has a positive impact on pupils' standard of work and progress in other subjects including information and communication technology, history and geography. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' progress in reading, noting specific skills that need further development. This makes a good contribution to their rate of learning.
83. The number of pupils meeting the expected standards in writing at the end of both key stages is well above average. Although not as many pupils by the end of Year 2 reach the higher levels in writing as they do in reading, baseline assessments show that all pupils achieve well in relation to their attainment on entry to the school, and some achieve very well. By the age of seven, most pupils write in simple sentences mostly using well-formed letters and reasonably accurate spelling. They write in a variety of forms, including poems, letters and stories. They begin to include relevant details and to use capital letters and full stops correctly. Some higher attaining pupils begin to use more structured sentences of varying length, with interesting vocabulary, as in a letter written by 'Arthur' a pet whale to his owner. 'I appreciate your care for me ---- I just love it when you stroke my head and tickle me!' - a good example of lively writing, which attracts the interest of the reader.
84. By the time they leave the school, pupils write in a wide variety of forms and usually spell accurately. Most are beginning to use more complex sentences confidently and to extend their ideas. Pupils are more adventurous in their use of words when writing poems, as in those on the theme of 'Water', but elsewhere they do not yet always use the range of vocabulary they do in oral work. Several higher attaining pupils however, vary sentence structure and adapt

their style and vocabulary competently to create particular effects in their writing. A striking example of this was seen in a letter written by a pupil to a local company to complain about the lack of toys for rabbits. She explained in part of it, 'I take him (the pet rabbit) out once a week on his lead, but other than that he is in his hutch all day. As Robber is very energetic, this is a problem.' This prompted an equally well written, amusing response from the company!

85. Pupils often make very good progress in literacy lessons in learning a good range of strategies and techniques for improving their writing, including the use of recognised authors as models. They have only limited opportunities to practise what they have learnt in independent sustained writing, or to re-draft and craft their own work to improve its content, style and structure, as well as its accuracy. The school has focused this year on improving the way pupils present their work and their handwriting. A scrutiny of pupils' books since September shows improvement in these aspects. However, teachers do not yet consistently use the new handwriting scheme, when writing on their whiteboards, in order to provide a good model for pupils.
86. The quality of teaching is very good overall. In the lessons seen, it was very good or better in 80 per cent of them and never less than satisfactory. There is also a significant improvement in the amount of teaching that is very good or better and this is a key factor in the overall very good achievements of pupils. This was illustrated in a very well taught lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils were using their own experience of a clearly enjoyable visit to Skegness the previous week to learn how to write a recount, so they were keen to express their ideas. The teacher reviewed and reinforced what pupils had learnt earlier in the week about the structure and sequencing of a recount, moving on very effectively from precisely the point reached by the teacher who shares the class. This was an excellent example of joint planning and communication that results in seamless learning for the pupils. She modelled the writing of two events very well indeed, using very good questioning and encouraging the use of connectives to improve the quality of pupils' suggestions. She continually pushed and challenged them further - 'What tense? - What can you add? - Is there a better word?' She moved them on from, for example, 'We were walking around and things', to 'As we walked around the town, we saw the Jolly Fisherman everywhere'. She used well-chosen examples from other texts to model interesting endings, using a lot of humour effectively to help pupils recall ending that are, 'Not allowed!' - such as, 'Then we went home', or 'We went to bed'. She encouraged pupils to try out endings orally with a partner, resulting in improved suggestions such as, 'I had a brilliant day', or 'We didn't want to come home'. In spite of it being the end of a very hot and busy day, all pupils settled down quickly to their task. They worked very well independently to produce good quality work in only 20 minutes, which was well structured, and quite accurately spelt. They used interesting vocabulary phrases, such as, 'delicious', and 'Mrs N kindly paid for it'. Many pupils had successfully linked their ideas with connectives such as 'when', 'because' and 'meanwhile'. Their work clearly showed how well they had improved their writing by successfully applying what they had learnt over the week.
87. Teachers show a very good understanding of the national literacy strategy. This is evident in their skilful and challenging questioning seen in lessons. This is made particularly effective by the very good knowledge teachers have of each pupils' learning as a result of the detailed assessments they make. They use this so that questions are pitched at just the right level for pupils of all abilities. Several good examples were seen of lessons plans being adjusted in the light of pupils' responses in the previous lesson, where teachers felt pupils needed more consolidation or greater challenge. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, which they often help them to achieve by sharing the learning objectives of each lesson and activity very clearly with them. These take good account of pupils' different ages in each class as well as their differing abilities. These features contribute well to the very good progress that pupils often make in lessons.
88. All teachers mark pupils' work carefully. In the class for Year 4 and 5 pupils, the quality of marking is exemplary. Detailed individual comments help pupils to know precisely what to do to improve their work and helps them to make very good progress as they act upon the suggestions in subsequent work. However, although teachers set relevant group targets for pupils to work on, they do not yet use these to full effect in lessons to help pupils focus on areas for improvement. Some lessons were less effective, although satisfactory, because the

organisation of some activities led to the pace dropping, or pupils taking some time to settle to their tasks.

89. The co-ordinator, who manages the subject very well, has made a very good contribution to this through the in-service training of new colleagues, especially through the very good opportunities provided for teachers to observe and share the expertise of the two leading literacy teachers that are on the staff. The results of this can be seen in the improvements in standards since the last inspection as well as the very consistent approach to teaching the national literacy strategy, which helps pupils to build effectively on previous learning. There is good range of termly and annual assessments that is used increasingly well to track pupils' progress across the school and to identify those in need additional support as well as to identify and address relative areas of weakness in the curriculum. Teachers plan carefully to provide relevant and stimulating activities that motivate and interest pupils very well. These include the good use of a wide range of visits as starting points for their work, very effective links with other subjects to provide a good sense of purpose and frequent opportunities to practise their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. This year, the school's participation in the Vale Writing Project has led to visits from poets and authors such as Paul Cookson and Michaela Morgan to work with pupils in a way that clearly enthused and inspired them. The rich curriculum makes a strong contribution to the very positive attitudes pupils have towards their work and their very good behaviour in lessons. It also makes a very good contribution to their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

90. Results of the national tests for seven year olds in 2000 showed pupils' attainment to be very high when compared to the national averages at level 2 or above. The number of pupils obtaining level 3 or above was well above the national average. The broad overview of results for 2000 was that pupils' attainment was very high when compared to the national average and very high when compared to similar schools. The unconfirmed results from 2001 show similarly high standards. Results for the three years from 1998 to 2000 were above the national average. However, because of the small number of pupils taking the tests each year, there is sometimes a considerable year to year variation in results. These variations mean that care is necessary in the interpretation of change in the school's results from one year to the next. There are no national tests for Year 5 pupils.
91. Inspection findings shows standards in mathematics are well above the expected levels by the ages of seven and ten. Pupils of all abilities achieve well in both key stages. They build consistently on the good start they receive in the foundation stage and on the good and often very good progress they make in lessons as they move through the school. As a result of this, by the time they leave the school, they achieve very well overall in relation to their individual prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well in relation to their individual abilities. No evidence was observed of any gender differences. This signifies very good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be satisfactory at both key stages. Progress was judged to be good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Progress of pupils with special educational needs was judged to be satisfactory at both key stages.

92. The quality of teaching is very good overall at both key stages and results in very good learning by the pupils. No lessons observed were less than good. This is an improvement on the judgements of the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be always satisfactory and often good and learning was judged to be good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and they apply the national numeracy strategy well. There is a very good commitment to raising the standards that pupils achieve. Pupils are taught at a very good pace and with a very good level of challenge. Teachers use activities that motivate and interest the pupils, which results in pupils enjoying mathematics lessons and feeling challenged. For example, in the introduction to a very good lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils, the teacher used three large foam dice to challenge four teams of pupils to use mental strategies to add, subtract, divide and multiply the numbers on each die, to find as many answers as possible from one to twelve. The addition of a competitive element to the task encouraged pupils to think quickly about their answers and to discuss with their team mates their strategies. The lesson quickly moved on to the main part of the lesson, where pupils worked in pairs to use the same strategies to work out the totals of three numbers placed on a grid of nine squares. The three columns, three rows and the two diagonals had to total the same. By good questioning, well-matched tasks, very good use of the learning support assistant, and the teacher's general enthusiasm for the subject, pupils were very well motivated, enjoyed the challenge and made very good progress in the lesson. Teachers use questioning well to assess understanding but do not always use pupils' errors and misconceptions as further teaching points or ask pupils to explain and share their personal mental strategies. The pace of lessons is very good and ensures pupils are motivated. All teachers display the objectives of the lesson, so that the pupils have an awareness of what they are learning, but they do not always discuss the lesson objectives with the pupils, recap them at the end of the lesson, or ask pupils to self-evaluate whether they have understood the objectives. Lessons are well planned, which is an improvement since the previous inspection report, when planning was judged to be satisfactory. At Key Stage 1 the good planning allows for a very smooth transition between the two teachers who job share in the Year 1 and 2 class. Both teachers clearly know the objectives for the week and how well pupils have achieved the objectives of the previous lessons, and so are able to continue to build on previous work to ensure very good progress. Good use is made in both key stages of assessment of pupils against the lesson objectives, which then informs future planning. Good use is made of homework.
93. Lessons are well organised and start with a brisk, whole class, mental warm-up session, in which teachers try to involve everyone. In all lessons, after the warm-up activities, pupils work in groups. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support by classroom assistants and make very good progress. The whole class then comes back together to share what they have learnt. Teachers maintain very good class management and create a very good atmosphere for learning. Although number squares are displayed in each classroom, not all teachers clearly display number lines for pupils to refer to. Where they are on display, they are sometimes too small or inconveniently placed for pupils to see and use.
94. There is no difference in standards between the different areas of the mathematics curriculum. By the age of seven standards in numeracy are well above the expected levels and pupils achieve well. The majority can confidently add and subtract two and three digit numbers including money, weight and measure, see patterns in number, continue a sequence to 100, recall their times tables, identify halves and quarters and tell the time using the hour, half hour and quarter hour. By the age of ten pupils have a good recall of number bonds and the strategies for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of number. They can describe their mental strategies for recalling number facts. They can add and subtract three digit numbers and multiply and divide by 10, 100 and 1000 whole numbers and numbers with decimals to two places, including money. The higher ability pupils can convert fractions to decimals. They use calculators appropriately to check results.
95. In their work on shape, space and measurement, Year 2 pupils can tell the time on a twelve-hour clock. They can describe the properties of a two-dimensional shape and simple three-dimensional shapes. By the age of ten, pupils can tell the time on a digital and analogue clock. They use appropriate language when describing two-dimensional and three-dimensional

shapes. They recognise right angles and angles bigger and smaller than a right angle and measure in degrees and can describe shapes with reflective symmetry.

96. In their work on data handling, pupils at the age of seven can construct bar graphs, from the results of a tally survey, to show the different types of transport that pass through the village. They interpret their results well. At the age of ten, pupils can construct bar, line and pie graphs of their results and successfully interrogate the graphs for information. For example, they draw graphs to show the different cities, towns and villages where their parents commute to work and graphs to show the time that pupils go to bed. The well-chosen activities, linked to real life situations, ensure that pupils are challenged, well motivated and enjoy the tasks.
97. Mathematics and numeracy are used very well across the curriculum. For example, Year 5 pupils use data from science and geography lessons to produce graphs of pulse rates, temperature and rainfall. They also use sensors and data logging programs to produce line graphs of their results from a science experiment to test the relationship between temperature and the time taken for ice to melt. In Year 4, pupils use spreadsheets to produce charts of the amount of water used at home. In Year 1 and 2, pupils measure the growth of sunflower seeds, measure the distance a toy car travels down different inclines of a ramp, draw tally charts of the different types of vehicles that travel through the village at a given time and produce graphs on the computer of favourite areas for holidays, such as cities, countryside and seaside. Across both key stages, pupils also use time-lines in history, co-ordinates in geography, and measure ingredients in food technology.
98. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well. She has a clear understanding of the strengths of the subject and areas to develop, which are identified in the annual development plan. The subject is well resourced. Good use is made of information technology. A successful parents' evening about the numeracy strategy has been held to give parents an understanding of how mathematics is being taught. This helps parents to support their children's development well. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual and social development of the pupils.

SCIENCE

99. The results of teacher assessment at the age of seven in 2000 show the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above, and level 3 or above, was very high across all areas of study when compared to the national average for all schools. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was also well above the national average. However, because of the small number of pupils taking the tests each year, there can be a considerable year to year variation in results and care is necessary in the interpretation of changes in the school's results from one year to the next. There are no national tests for Year 5 pupils.
100. Inspection evidence indicates that by the age of 7 standards are above national expectations and well above national expectations by the age of 10. This indicates an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be above expectations at both key stages.
101. At Key Stage 1, the achievement of pupils is good. They are developing good scientific knowledge, understanding and skills in relevant practical contexts. They are encouraged to ask questions and predict outcomes of their investigations, which they do with increased confidence. At Key Stage 2 pupils achieve well again, so that their overall achievement by the time they leave the school is very good. By the end of Year 5, attainment in practical and investigative science, and the use of 'fair tests', is well above that expected nationally. Pupils confidently discuss how the outcomes of an experiment can be affected when a different variable is changed or the test is not a fair one. Pupils use charts, diagrams and graphs in a variety of ways to record their results and test their hypothesis.
102. In their study of life processes and living things, pupils at the end of Year 2 can name the major organs of the body, the main parts of a flower and can describe conditions basic to animal and plant life. They understand which foods are healthy or unhealthy. They can identify

“minibeasts” and their habitats found around the school and in the garden. They sort animals, birds and insects in to groups by colour, shells, skeleton, number of legs, hair or feathers and whether they are day time or nocturnal animals. By the age of 10, pupils are able to make predictions and carry out observations related to plant growth and the factors that influence plant life. They can describe the life cycle of a plant and plan and carry out an experiment to find the best place in the school to germinate and grow watercress. From their observations they can make deductions about plant growth. They know the life cycle of humans and can describe the function of the main internal organs and the effect of exercise on the body. For example, in a very good Year 4 and 5 lesson observed, pupils carried out their own group tests in the neighbouring park, to test the effect of exercise on the heart and pulse. Each group was very motivated by the challenging task and ensured that the exercises were fair and safe. They made good deductions from the results of the test.

103. In their study of materials and their properties, pupils at Key Stage 1 can sort the properties of wood, glass and plastic by texture, flexibility and transparency. They know that certain materials change when heated and cooled. At Key Stage 2, pupils investigate the properties of materials and record their results well in the form of charts and graphs. They use computers well to support their work. For example, they use a data-logging program to investigate which materials let light pass through the most or least. They know the properties of solids, gases and liquids and that changes in materials when heated or cooled are not always reversible.
104. In their work on physical processes, Key Stage 1 pupils have a good understanding of how sound and light travel. They can construct a simple circuit to illuminate a light bulb. They can design an experiment to investigate the forces that act on a toy car. For example, Year 2 pupils plan and carry out tests to investigate how far a toy car will travel along different inclines of a ramp. By the end of Year 5, pupils can explain how sound can be loud and soft and how light travels to the eye. They can construct a variety of circuits and draw the circuit diagram. Year 4 pupils were observed making their own torch using knowledge gained from their previous work on circuits.
105. The quality of teaching at both key stages is very good. No lessons observed were less than good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory at both key stages and sometimes good. Suitable opportunities are created for investigations and questions. Practical activities are well matched to the abilities and age groups within the class. Lessons are well organised and well resourced. This results in all pupils, including those with special educational needs, making very good progress overall in both key stages. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and they teach science with enthusiasm. This motivates the pupils, who enjoy their work and feel challenged by the tasks set. As a result their attitudes and behaviour are very good. In two lessons observed attitudes and behaviour were excellent. By the age of 10, pupils contribute enthusiastically to discussion, concentrate on their task and show very good levels of curiosity and interest. Boys and girls work well together and make similar progress. All pupils are aware of the safety routines and work sensibly during experimental work. Learning support assistants and volunteer parent helpers are given good guidance by the class teachers and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Although teachers display the lesson objectives for pupils to refer to, not all teachers begin the lesson by discussing the objectives, or ending the lesson by recapping them, to ensure that they have been fully understood by the pupils.
106. The co-ordinator gives very good leadership. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and supports teachers well. Since the previous report a policy and scheme of work have been put in to place, which ensure that pupils build progressively on previous learning. The subject supports English, mathematics, information technology and design and technology well. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils keep a diary of the growth of their sunflowers and at both key stages pupils write extended accounts of their experiments. At Key Stage 1, pupils sort animals and insects using a number of attributes and measure the growth of their sunflowers. Key Stage 2 pupils draw charts and graphs to record the results of their water experiments and use stop watches and a pulse rate monitor when investigating how exercise affects the body. At Key Stage 2 pupils use sensors linked to computers to monitor changes in temperature and rainfall. In design technology pupils observe changes of state of materials when making bread, pizzas and ice cream. The subject is further enhanced by the use of the school's millennium

garden, the neighbouring churchyard and park and the local woods. Science also contributes well to the spiritual and social development of the pupils. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the pupils sat with rapt attention as they watched a video of a butterfly hatching from a pupa.

ART AND DESIGN

107. Not enough teaching was observed during the inspection week to make a judgement about its overall quality. However, discussions with staff and pupils, scrutiny of planning, displays, photographs and pupils' sketchbooks indicate that the majority of pupils reach the expected standards for their age by the end of Key Stage 1 and when they leave the school at the end of Year 5. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school, as they did at the time of the last report.
108. In Years 1 and 2, pupils explore ideas of symmetry, encountered in mathematics, to extend their ideas of shape and pattern. They begin to develop their observational skills, for example, by studying the patterns and colours in cross sections of fruit and vegetables and represent these in a variety of media, such as paint and clay. Older pupils show good attention to details of shape in applied pictures. They develop their cutting and stitching skills well, when making attractive felt pictures of flowers. They experiment with mixing colours and use this to make appropriate skin tones, when painting lively portraits of a friend. They practise weaving with a good variety of materials. In part of a lesson seen for pupils in Reception and Year 1, where the quality of teaching was good, some Year 1 pupils could say what they liked or disliked about Van Gogh's painting of 'Daisies and Poppies' in response to skilful questioning. A few gave thoughtful reasons such as, 'I don't like the green bits he put on the white ---- it looks like witches' hair'. Another recalled Van Gogh's painting of 'Sunflowers'. In their group activity to make a felt picture, based on a chosen fresh flower, the teacher had high expectations of pupils in making and using their own template for the petal shape. Some pupils clearly found this very challenging, but the teacher's very clear, patient explanations, together with the very good relationships she had with them, encouraged them to persevere, improve their skills and produce work by the end of the lesson of which they were justly proud.
109. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to improve their observational skills when sketching and then successfully using watercolours for paintings of daffodils. They make appropriate use of sketch books both to evaluate their work and to plan pictures, for example, in the style of Mondrian. They continue to work with textiles, increasing the range of stitches they can use. Pupils in Year 5 build on these skills when working in pairs to make interesting fabric pictures of scenes from the Greek legends. They experiment with drawing three-dimensional shapes in pencil to improve their shading skills. They plan the design of clay containers carefully, having studied pictures of a range of antique jars and bowls from other cultures, such as a Syrian cosmetic box and a Chinese jar with dragon handles. Many of their designs show originality and their evaluations explain how they overcame difficulties, such as a cap shape for a lid not fitting properly. The finished containers are very well made, full of character and with good attention to detail. Attractive displays around the school show a steady progression in skills throughout the school and provide good examples of the way that art is often used well to support pupils' learning in other subjects such as English, history, geography and information and communication technology.
110. The subject is co-ordinated jointly by teachers. They plan together carefully to ensure that the requirements of the revised curriculum are met and to help pupils to develop their skills systematically. This has been helped by the introduction of a useful assessment system to track pupils' progress in relation to the key learning objectives for each term. Good use is made of the local environment as a stimulus for artwork. The curriculum is enriched by the day visits all pupils make to Patchings Farm Art Centre. Inviting displays of work around the school show pupils how much their work and efforts are valued and is one example of how well the subject contributes to their spiritual and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. During the inspection only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1 and two group activities for Year 5 pupils at Key Stage 2. Therefore, judgements are based on the limited observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and staff, displays and evidence of past work.
112. Inspection evidence indicates that by the age of 7, pupils' achievements are satisfactory and they reach standards that are in line with national expectations. By the end of the Key Stage 1 pupils can identify appropriate materials that should be used. They design and make models from recyclable materials and evaluate their results. They satisfactorily learn the skills of cutting, sticking and joining. By the age of 10, pupils achieve well and attain standards that are above expectations for pupils of a similar age. As well as using recyclable materials, pupils also use commercially produced construction kits to make models with moving mechanisms, which are controlled by computer. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards at Key Stage 2 were judged to be satisfactory.
113. At Key Stage 1, pupils satisfactorily design, make and evaluate their work. For example, they make vehicles from recyclable materials and with moving wheels and evaluate the success of their construction. They make simple two-dimensional pictures of a seaside scene from a pictorial design and, in food technology, make a fruit salad using four fruits having first evaluated eight different fruits for taste. In the Key Stage 1 lesson observed, pupils designed on plain paper a seaside scene with two or three moving parts, before transferring their design to colourful card and paper. The end results included a beach ball that moved across the page, a lobster that moved and bit a child's toe and a bathing machine with a door that opened. The work complimented well the history topic on holidays long ago and holidays now. Before planning their final design the pupils made a fish with a mouth that opened and closed in order to investigate how to make parts move or pop-up. They also looked at commercially produced pop-up books.
114. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 and 4 pupils design, make and evaluate moving monsters made from recyclable material, papier-mâché animals, picture frames, money containers and model chairs for cartoon characters, such as Homer Simpson and Bugs Bunny. By Year 5, pupils design and make string and percussion instruments after evaluating commercially produced ones, make a toy with moving parts and taste and evaluate bread before making their own bread and designing and making a meal.
115. As only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1 and only a Year 5 group activity at Key Stage 2, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching at either key stage. However, in the Key Stage 1 lesson observed teaching was good. The lesson was well organised and well resourced and provided good challenge for the pupils. The pupils made good progress. The learning support assistants ensured that pupils with special educational needs were fully included and made equally good progress. The attitudes of the pupils were very good and they showed pleasure and pride in their work. Behaviour was also very good and they worked in a calm and purposeful way. In the Year 5 group work observed teaching was excellent. The pupils were completely motivated and totally absorbed by the challenging tasks set by the teacher. Two groups were using a computer program to control a fun fair ride made from a commercially produced construction kit. The third group worked with a parent to design and make a three-course meal as part of the pupils' end of school celebrations. The pupils independently followed recipes for making bread, pizza and fruit salad. With the support of the parent, they also made ice cream. The evaluation took the form of a sit down meal at lunchtime, at a properly laid table, where the pupils could taste the results of their hard work.
116. Since the previous inspection a policy and a nationally produced scheme of work have been introduced. These have helped to ensure that there is progression and continuity within the subject and across both key stages. They have also led to the improved progress at Key Stage 2, which is resulting in standards that are now above expectations. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

117. Evidence from lessons, discussions with staff and pupils, scrutiny of planning, displays and previous work across the school indicate that the majority of pupils reach the expected standards for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily, as at the time of the last inspection.
118. By the age of seven, pupils begin to distinguish different types, features and purposes of buildings during walks around Stathern, such as terraced and detached housing and an architects' office. They consider how the area around the school could be made safer. They build upon earlier experiences of making pictorial maps of the village and their route to school, by using simple keys when drawing a map of a seaside location from an aerial photograph. They draw graphs to show where pupils prefer to take their holidays, using a computer program to display the results in four different ways. They compare aspects of life on the Isle of Struay with those in Stathern.
119. By the age of ten, pupils have a sound knowledge of the features of their own locality, which they compare with those of contrasting localities such as the town of Loughborough. They develop appropriate mapping skills, including the use of four figure grid references and Ordnance Survey symbols to interpret maps of the local area. They conduct surveys among their parents to find out their shopping habits, when studying the features of settlements of different sizes. They make a tally of their family's water use over a week to help them understand more fully the impact of the lack of a safe and adequate water supply on people's lives, in countries such as Ghana.
120. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with some that is good. In a well taught lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, the teacher fully engaged the pupils' interest by setting a challenge to see which group could get muddy water the cleanest. She used very skilful, open ended questioning to stimulate pupils to raise hypotheses and to experiment with different layering and quantities of cotton wool, sand and gravel to find the most effective combination to filter the water. As a result they worked with full concentration, building on each other's ideas, to find solutions. The teacher used the plenary session very well to help pupils to draw conclusions from their work such as, 'Too much sand absorbed the water', and to elicit their ideas about why filtering alone was not enough to make safe drinking water. As a result, pupils made good progress in their learning. All teachers make very good use of fieldwork and visits to make much of the planned work relevant and interesting for pupils so that they are keen to learn. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher made good use of their observations, during their recent visit to Skegness. This helped them to distinguish between human and physical features and then to identify and compare examples of each on aerial photographs of Stathern and a seaside town. Pupils settled quickly to their tasks, keen to find familiar features. They located and labelled their examples well. Teachers also give good attention to extending pupils' vocabulary by ensuring that they both understand and use terminology such as 'precipitation' and 'condensation' correctly.
121. The co-ordinator has successfully promoted a very consistent approach to teaching the subject, which helps pupils to build on previous learning. It is based on the progressive development of enquiry and other identified geographical skills and the very good use of field and practical work. Teachers often plan very apt and meaningful planned links with other subjects such as mathematics, science and information and communication technology. This contributes considerably to the motivation and great interest shown by pupils in their work, as the enthusiasm from their learning in one area spills over into the next. This, in turn, has a visible impact on their progress in lessons. In the current study on the theme of water, aspects of life in developing countries are integrated in a relevant and meaningful way for pupils, through, for example, their 'Aquabox' project. However, past work indicates that some topics, such as a comparison of Chembakoli with Stathern, are not studied in the same depth with the result that pupils show only a superficial understanding. Overall, through the very good use of the local area and the raising of pupils' awareness of wider environmental and social issues, for example, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

122. During the inspection week it was not possible to observe any teaching of history. Therefore, judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff, displays, photographs and evidence of past work.
123. Inspection evidence indicates that by the age of seven, pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations. By the age of ten, pupils reach standards that are above the national expectations. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 pupils study seaside holidays of 100 years ago and compare them to holidays of today. They study life in Victorian times and are able to soundly recall the main events in the lives of Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling. By the end of Year 5, pupils are able to recall well the important characteristics of Ancient Egyptian and Ancient Greek societies, they know about the life of Celtic Britons and the effect of the Roman invasion on Britain. They can discuss the importance of Queen Boudicca in uniting Celtic tribes against the Romans. Pupils produce an independent study of Tudor Life and can talk about the reasons why Henry VIII married 6 times. They talk with enthusiasm about Victorian life for the rich and poor and town and country dwellers.
124. At both key stages, the achievement of pupils is good. They are able to recall well their work in history lessons and by Year 5 are developing a good understanding of chronology and historical facts. They research information from books, pictures and the Internet. The use of visits and visitors to make the subject more relevant for pupils is good. A local resident talks to pupils about her childhood memories. The village and St. Guthlac's church are used to study the changes in the local environment, Key Stage 1 pupils visit Belvoir Castle and Key Stage 2 pupils the Egyptian section of New Walk Museum. As part of the Vale curriculum enrichment days Year 4 and 5 pupils have taken part in a Tudor Day at Wollaton Hall and a Victorian Day at Belton House.
125. As no lessons were observed during the inspection week, it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching and learning. However, lessons are well planned and based on a nationally produced scheme of work. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when there was no scheme of work in place. The pupils spoken to during the inspection week have good attitudes to the subject and a good recall of the topics studied. By Year 5, they have a good sense of chronology. They clearly enjoy their lessons. The Year 5 pupils spoken to enjoyed researching specific topics for their groups, reporting back to the group and producing a group fact sheet. For example, the pupils produced group fact sheets about Celtic and Roman life, which contained writing, drawings, word-processed accounts, information from the Internet and scanned pictures. Each group then reported back to the others to share information.
126. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy, through written work, research work and oral reporting back to others. The contribution to numeracy is also good, through the use of time lines and the developing sense of chronology. Resources, especially artefacts, are satisfactory, but are well supplemented from the loan service for schools and visits. Good use is made of information technology. Good use is made of assessment to inform planning and to monitor pupils' progress.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

127. During the inspection week, it was only possible to observe pupils working in groups at the computers. No whole class introductory lessons were observed. Therefore, judgements are based on observations of groups, the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, photographs, teachers' planning and assessment records and discussion with pupils and teachers.
128. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and well above expectations by the end of Year 5. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory at both key stages. Numerous opportunities are being provided for pupils to use information technology across the curriculum, notably in English,

mathematics, science, art, design technology, geography and history. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well at Key Stage 1 and very well at Key Stage 2. Since the previous inspection computers have been upgraded to two multimedia computers in each class, a computer in the library and a lap top computer in the Year 4 and 5 class. The new computers are having a positive impact on raising standards. Also, the school has recently invested in an interactive 'smart board', which allows for whole class teaching. Pupils can see an enlarged image of the computer monitor on a large screen. As teachers quickly gain confidence with the board it is already being used to demonstrate programs and skills to the whole class.

129. By the age of seven, pupils can use the mouse to open files and folders, select from an on-screen menu, delete and insert letters and words and print their work. They know that information can be obtained from television, video, tape, digital camera, the Internet and CD-ROMs. Classroom displays, work in pupils' books, and pupils' own 'I can' assessment booklets, show that in English pupils can word-process their work, in history they produce block graphs and pie charts of where they would like to go on holiday, in science they research information on butterflies and in mathematics they use a simulation program about buying items at a post office.
130. By the age of ten, pupils confidently log-on, manipulate screen icons using the mouse, select items from an on-screen menu, use the 'drag and drop' features of a program, import information from files, the Internet and a scanner, and print their work. They write stories and letters using different font styles, font sizes and colours. For example, in English, Year 4 and 5 pupils word process letters in a persuasive style to various companies and council and government departments. Topics range from complaints to the parish council about litter in the local park, to complaints to a national manufacturer of toys for pets, complaining about the lack of stimulating toys for rabbits, to complaints to a multinational computer games company about the poor quality of their programs. All letters were sent and a vast majority received a reply. Pupils import clip art, photographs and scanned pictures in to their text. For example, Year 5 pupils import animal photographs on to a page and then write a poem about the animal over the picture. Very good use is made of the Internet to research information and to send and receive e-mails. During the inspection week, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils were observed using the Internet to find out more about their 'Water Aid' topic and to use a simulation program to model how water supplies can be improved in African, Indian and Nepalese villages.
131. The quality of teaching at both key stages is good. In a Key Stage 2 lesson observed, taken by the co-ordinator, teaching was excellent. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a good knowledge of programs available. They plan work well and ensure that it is relevant to the interests of the pupils. This represents an improvement in teaching since the previous inspection, when teachers were judged to lack knowledge and where very little planning was evident. The planning of topics that are relevant and interesting to the pupils is a strength of the subject. As a result, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils towards information technology is very good. They are eager to learn new skills and happy to share these with their classmates. For example, Year 5 pupils helped reception and Key Stage 1 pupils write and e-mail letters to Father Christmas, which received replies. Key Stage 2 pupils e-mailed questions and comments to an Antarctic survey team, and received instant replies. In the excellent lesson observed, Year 5 pupils were challenged to program a control device to move a model ghost train and a model roundabout made from commercial construction kits. The challenge totally absorbed the pupils, who yelled with delight when the toys finally moved under the control of the computer.
132. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has identified the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. She gives very good leadership and has ensured that the key issue of the previous report, to raise standards in the subject, has been addressed well. She is aware of the need for staff to be well trained in order to continue to raise standards and this is being achieved through a national training initiative, which the co-ordinator has ensured meets the specific needs of the staff. Good use is made of learning support assistants and parents in lessons. They are given good guidance by teachers and support the pupils well. The introduction of a nationally produced scheme of work is ensuring that the curriculum is broad and balanced and enables pupils to develop their skills systematically. The newly appointed

governor for information technology has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. The school pays towards a technician shared by schools in the Vale area. He keeps the computers in good repair and working at optimum performance. Displays are used well to celebrate pupils' work. Good use is made of the digital camera to record pupils' work across the whole curriculum. The subject is well placed for continued improvement and development.

MUSIC

133. No lessons or written evidence of pupils' work were seen during the inspection period and consequently no overall judgements can be made about standards, pupils' achievements or the quality of teaching. The judgements made are based on scrutiny of planning, some evidence of singing and discussions with pupils and teachers. Apart from occasional supplementary lessons by class teachers, the subject is mainly planned and taught by an instructor and an accompanist, who visit the school weekly. In the inspection week, at that time, they were involved in a rehearsal for the Leavers' Service in the local church, where pupils from all classes were practising a number of hymns and songs. These were sung with enthusiasm and generally clear diction but with few dynamics. In some, pupils were unsure of the words and a few shouted rather than sang. Pupils clearly enjoyed singing, especially those songs with actions or simple percussion accompaniment. A small group of Year 5 pupils performed their own 'rap' song with aplomb, but generally the variety of the items was limited. Evidence from this and from the singing in assemblies indicates that the majority of pupils broadly meet the expectations for their ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 5 in this aspect of the subject.
134. Scrutiny of current planning and discussions with pupils and teachers shows that although the main elements required by the National Curriculum are taught, there is an imbalance between the different aspects of the subject. This means that there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop the full range of composing, listening and appraising skills or to build progressively on earlier learning. In Key Stage 2, for example, pupils from all three year groups are taught together, and planning, which is not supported by the same national schemes as other subjects, gives no indication of how lesson objectives will be adapted to provide work of an appropriate level for pupils of differing ages. Although pupils say how much they enjoy music lessons, the knowledge that they show in discussion suggests that they are not achieving satisfactorily in all aspects of the subject.
135. Some of the criticisms in the last report made of provision for the subject, particularly in the area of planning, have not yet been addressed effectively. However, the recently appointed co-ordinator is suitably qualified for the post. She has carried out a detailed audit of current planning and identified appropriate priorities for the development of the subject. She has begun to extend pupils' opportunities to listen to music from different cultures through the careful choice of music for assemblies. She now runs a well-attended recorder club. All pupils have opportunities to perform singing at annual events such as the Harvest Festival and Christmas concert in the local church. Such activities promote their social and cultural development satisfactorily.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. During the inspection week, it was only possible to observe one swimming lesson and two games lessons at Key Stage 2. No gymnastics or dance lessons were seen. Therefore, judgements are based on a limited observation of all areas of the physical education curriculum, teachers' planning, photographs and discussion with teachers and pupils.
137. It is not possible to judge the standards reached at Key Stage 1, as no lessons were observed except for swimming. In swimming pupils achieve well and reach a good standard by the age of seven. It is not possible to give an overall judgement for all aspects of the physical education curriculum at Key Stage 2 but by the age of ten standards are above national expectations in games, swimming and athletics. In these aspects all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress. During the previous inspection only swimming was observed and judgements about standards were similar.
138. It is not possible to judge the quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 as no lessons were seen. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good and results in good learning. In one lesson observed teaching was very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and set a good example to pupils by dressing appropriately and leading by example. They ensure that pupils wear appropriate dress. All lessons include the essential elements of warming up and cooling down. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and ensure that lessons are well paced and well managed. This ensures that pupils work hard all of the time, are challenged and motivated and behave very well, thus resulting in good progress. However, not all teachers give pupils the opportunity to demonstrate to each other or to constructively evaluate each other's performance. For example, in a very good Year 4 and 5 games lesson the teacher enthusiastically and knowledgeably taught the pupils how to throw a foam javelin with accuracy and safety. Her good knowledge of throwing techniques resulted in the pupils making very good progress and they worked with enthusiasm and enjoyment. The teacher also took the opportunity to use the pupils' throwing actions to support their science work on forces. However, although the teacher encouraged pupils to watch each other, they were given few opportunities to evaluate each other's technique and skills.
139. In all lessons, pupils are made aware of how continuous exercise affects the body and heart rate. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 lesson, where pupils practised jumping over hurdles and baton changes for the relay race, the pupils were asked to test their pulse immediately after the end of the main activity and again after the cool down session to discover any difference in their heart rate. All teachers stress the need for safety in lessons and have very good control. Pupils are very good at responding immediately. For example, in the Year 3 and 4 lesson observed, pupils stopped immediately a pupil tripped over a hurdle and waited until the pupil had recovered and the track was safe to use again before continuing the lesson.
140. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are enthusiastic about physical education lessons. They respond well to activities and show enjoyment in lessons. They work well individually, in pairs and in groups. By the age of ten, pupils are able to perform with suppleness, control, accuracy and safety, a range of basic skills such as throwing, catching and travelling in a variety of ways and directions. They demonstrate good control when linking actions together. The majority of pupils can swim 25 metres by the age of seven. By the end of Year 5 the majority of pupils are swimming beyond the minimum requirement of 25 metres and are reaching a much higher standard.
141. The school uses national guidelines, and a published scheme, as a basis for planning. This helps pupils to develop their skills systematically as they move through the school.
142. The playground is adequate in size for a class lesson. There is no school hall so pupils use the village hall for indoor lessons. When the weather allows, the school also uses the adjacent park for outdoor activities such as games and athletics. Although facilities are not ideal, the school makes good use of what is available and ensures that all areas of the curriculum are taught.

143. The breadth and range of the physical education curriculum are good. All classes from reception and Year 1 to Year 5 have regular swimming lessons. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 have been taught by a tennis coach, the whole school has had lessons with football coaches from Nottingham Forest Football Club, the Leicester Tigers have coached Key Stage 2 pupils in rugby. A basket ball coach has taught Key Stage 2 pupils and Leicester Cricket Club has coached pupils in cricket, with a specific focus this year on girls cricket in order to encourage them to take up the sport. All of this contributes to the better than expected standards by the end of Year 5. Extra curricular activities include football, netball and cross-country running. Key Stage 2 pupils take part in cross country competitions with other Vale and Leicestershire primary schools, football matches against Vale schools and a sports day with Vale schools, as part of the curriculum enrichment initiative. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the pupils. For example, pupils take part in a dance display at the annual village May Fair. This includes a 'parachute dance' by the reception children, country dancing by Year 1 and 2 pupils and a Maypole dance by Key Stage 2 pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. Evidence from the one lesson observed during the inspection, together with discussions with staff and pupils, scrutiny of planning, displays and previous work indicate that standards broadly meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 5. Boys and girls of all abilities achieve satisfactorily overall as they move through the school. Standards are similar to those described in the previous report.
145. By the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with the events of the Christian celebrations of Easter and Christmas. Some pupils can offer reasons why, for example, Jesus spent forty days in the desert or why Christians are baptised. They find out about the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and how and why the Passover is celebrated each year. They explore and share their thoughts about who and what is special to them and what it means to belong. By the time pupils leave the school, they are familiar with stories from the Old and New Testaments. They increase their knowledge of Christianity by visiting the parish church, both to take part in services, for example at Harvest time, and to study its features. They can describe some of the beliefs and traditions of Sikhism and how these influence the way that its followers lead their lives. They have a superficial knowledge of some of the festivals and practices of Judaism, Islam and Hinduism, but confuse the religions to which these belong. They reflect thoughtfully on what is important to them, both within their families and in the world today and on the qualities needed as a member of a community.
146. Not enough teaching was seen to make an overall judgement on its quality. In the lesson observed for pupils in Years 1 and 2 about the Good Samaritan, it was very good. A particular strength was the way that the teacher modelled good listening skills very well and used carefully structured and targeted questions to help pupils to clarify their ideas and feelings. The very good relationships between pupils and with their teacher meant that pupils of all abilities shared their ideas and personal experiences confidently, secure in the knowledge that their teacher and their peers would value and respect their contributions. One pupil, for example, talked about the difficulty faced when asked to take sides in an argument and how she had resolved this. Skilful questioning resulted in several pupils giving clear explanations of a parable, such as 'They help people to understand about God'. The teacher had high expectations of pupils, which were underpinned by very good classroom organisation and challenging tasks that were very well matched to their differing ages and abilities. For example, pupils recorded their ideas in different ways so that those, whose writing skills were less developed, could still show their understanding of the lesson objectives. These factors resulted in all pupils concentrating and working very hard, completing a good amount of careful work in a short time. The teacher kept pupils well focused on these activities by the effective use of time targets. As a result of such teaching, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in understanding and expressing their thoughts and emotions as they move through the school. However, in the aspect of knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices, while the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress, some older pupils do not make as much progress as they could. This is because the

depth and challenge of the work taught in this area, especially about faiths other than Christianity, does not increase sufficiently as pupils move through the school.

147. Religious education is one of the subjects that teachers now co-ordinate jointly. They have reviewed the subject carefully this year and identified appropriate priorities for next year in the school development plan, including an audit of planning, staff training and improved resources. Regular visits from the ministers of local churches make a useful contribution to pupils' learning, as did a recent visit by the Bishop of Peru, who was staying in the village. As yet, not enough is done to enrich pupils' experience through, for example, visits to places of worship of other faiths. The school has already begun to address this. The subject makes a good contribution to the personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils, for example in fostering respect for the values and beliefs of others and in forming their own. Assemblies are now planned to include themes that support topics in religious education lessons and teachers make good links with these.